



Interview Summary: Acting Superintendent Kenneth A. Bryden (Ottawa Police Service)

Acting Superintendent Kenneth A. Bryden was interviewed by Frank Au, Mark Pritchard, Eric Brousseau, Misha Boutilier, and Sajeda Hedaraly on September 22, 2022. Questions about this summary should be directed to Eric Brousseau.

Text contained in [square brackets] are explanatory notes provided by Commission Counsel to assist the reader.

Background

At the time of the protests, Acting Superintendent Bryden was an Inspector at the Intelligence Directorate of the Ottawa Police Service (the “**OPS**”).

Acting Superintendent Bryden has been with the OPS for 26 years. He has worked in various sections of the OPS and has had exposure to intelligence in different units of the OPS. He was transferred into the Intelligence Directorate as Inspector on January 5, 2022.

Acting Superintendent Bryden’s role was to oversee a number of sections within the Intelligence Directorate, including covert intelligence, security intelligence (“**SIS**”), organized crime, witness protection, and technological support. SIS works closely with security partners locally and internationally on security matters by sharing information and intelligence reports. These security partners include the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (the “**RCMP**”) and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (“**CSIS**”). A Joint Intelligence Group (the “**JIG**”) led by OPS was set up [shortly after January 24, 2022].

The role of gathering intelligence on protests is the responsibility of the Intelligence Directorate, and not of the Special Events. Special Events would have to contact the Intelligence Directorate to request information, if any, as they are planning for an upcoming event. When asked whose responsibility it would be to flag concerns regarding a non-violent occupation of Ottawa, Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that if it was something he heard about, it is something he would have highlighted to Superintendent Patterson but if Special Events was aware of it first, he would assume it would be identified and shared.

Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that the Convoy had been called “Operation BearHug” before it took on the name of “Freedom Convoy”.

Other Relevant Persons in the Intelligence Directorate

Superintendent Robert Patterson was Acting Superintendent Bryden’s direct supervisor. Superintendent Patterson was part of the decision-planning team in the preparation for



the Convoy. Acting Superintendent Bryden briefed Superintendent Patterson daily, who could pass on the information to the executive, planning, and command teams.

Deputy Chief Bell was part of the executive and command teams. He was regularly briefed by Superintendent Patterson and was involved in any decisions or response that OPS would have to the Convoy.

Two constables from SIS, George Bouris or Stephane Quesnel, were under Acting Superintendent Bryden's supervision. Sergeant Chris Kiez was a sergeant for both Constable Bouris and Constable Quesnel. Sergeant Kiez was responsible for preparing a risk/threat assessment, which would be provided to both Special Events and the OPS executive. Acting Superintendent Bryden was not aware of the role played by either Staff Sergeant Isabelle Lemieux or Inspector Carl Cartwright.

When asked if anyone in the Intelligence Directorate was responsible for gathering open-source intelligence and social media intelligence, Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that no intelligence analyst was dedicated to open-source intelligence at the time, although one could be assigned to such sources of information on an *ad hoc* basis.

Pre-Arrival Intelligence

Acting Superintendent Bryden was aware that SIS was working on a convoy that was making its way to Ottawa, but did not pay much attention to it until January 25, 2022.

Hendon reports and Hendon calls

On January 25, 2022, Superintendent Patterson asked him to focus on these upcoming demonstrations and to participate to Project Hendon daily intelligence briefings led by the Ontario Provincial Police ("**OPP**"). [Project Hendon ("**Hendon**") is an intelligence sharing network led by OPP that prepared intelligence reports on the Freedom Convoy and shared them with OPS starting in January 2022.] Hendon daily briefings took place at 11 a.m. and were followed by a Hendon report later the same day.

On January 14, 2022, Acting Superintendent Bryden received the Hendon report dated January 13, 2022¹ from Superintendent Patterson. He does not know why Superintendent Patterson forwarded him that report on January 14, 2022. The next report he received was on January 25, 2022, when, as explained above, Superintendent Patterson asked him to participate to the Hendon calls. Acting Superintendent Bryden received all Hendon reports from that day onwards, but never received older reports (except the Hendon report mentioned above).

¹ Hendon report dated January 13, 2022, **OPP00001176**.



At the time, Acting Superintendent Bryden's overall impression of the Convoy was that its main risk was the sheer number of vehicles that were coming to Ottawa from across the country. Other law enforcement agencies had identified some specific vehicles and persons of interest but there were no national security type threats or risks. It appeared to be a group building in size, but for the most part regular people with a purpose and a message to deliver.

Acting Superintendent Bryden understood from the Hendon report dated January 25, 2022, that the Convoy had a lot of support. To the best of his knowledge, the Hendon report's statement that "Convoy organizers will almost certainly have little ability to influence or control the behaviour of some convoy participants and protest attendees" was not discussed during Hendon calls.² Acting Superintendent Bryden does not recall reading, in the same Hendon report, that "the lack of information relayed to the OPP about events in Ottawa during the period from 2022-01-28 to 2022-01-29 and on 2022-01-30 represents a serious intelligence gap". Acting Superintendent Bryden stressed that at the time, he was trying to familiarize himself with his role and that everything was new to him.³

On January 26, 2022, Acting Superintendent Bryden first took part in a Hendon call.⁴ He learned that people, vehicles, and trucks were making their way toward the capital from across the country. Police agencies from across Canada would report on the activities and progress of the movement. Acting Superintendent Bryden provided updates from the perspective of the OPS. An SIS member, usually Constable Bouris or Constable Quesnel, sometimes participated to Hendon calls, as did Superintendent Patterson.

On January 27, 2022, Acting Superintendent Bryden took part in another Hendon call.⁵ At that time, he was expecting several hundred vehicles to arrive in Ottawa, consisting of multiple convoys from different directions.

Acting Superintendent Bryden could not identify who provided the following information contained in his notes from the call: "heavy machinery observed; stocking up on food & water (length of stay); there are trucks with trailers (possible supplies)."⁶ In his experience, Acting Superintendent Bryden had never seen protestors carry heavy machinery into a

² Hendon report dated January 25, 2022, **OPP00001108**, p. 2.

³ Hendon report dated January 25, 2022, **OPP00001108**, p. 2.

⁴ See Acting Superintendent Bryden's notes, **OPS00014555**, pp. 1-2. See also Hendon report dated January 26, 2022, **OPP00001610**.

⁵ See Acting Superintendent Bryden's notes, **OPS00014555**, pp. 5-6.

⁶ Acting Superintendent Bryden's notes from the call, **OPS00014555**, p. 5.



city for a protest. This caused him to think that the protest might be more serious or different than other protests.

The Hendon report dated January 27, 2022 indicates that the presence of equipment “reinforced positions for long-term occupation in Ottawa” and that the presence of tractor-trailer combinations “could support an extended stay in Ottawa”, while acknowledging that “this remains unconfirmed.”⁷ According to Acting Superintendent Bryden, these statements were warnings identifying what everyone was seeing.

Acting Superintendent Bryden recalls that he was concerned about the possibility that protestors might stay in Ottawa more than a weekend and that he was confident that OPS troops and executive command were aware of this possibility. Acting Superintendent Bryden remembers not knowing exactly when the protestors would be coming and leaving Ottawa.

Acting Superintendent Bryden’s comment in his notes that “fringe elements” were “attaching themselves to the Convoy” was a generalized comment.⁸ He explained that fringe or rogue elements taking advantage of a platform is always a cause for concern in these types of protests.

On January 28, 2022, Acting Superintendent Bryden took part in another Hendon call.⁹ He does not know what the source was for the following mention in his notes: “Feb 4th (planning to stay minimum)”.¹⁰ The Hendon report from that day also states that “[t]he available information indicates that the protestors plan to remain in Ottawa at least until 2022-02-04”.¹¹ When asked if he agreed with this assessment, Acting Superintendent Bryden indicated that he does not recall agreeing with the statement, but that it made sense given the supplies that the protestors were carrying. He was not sure where the specific date of February 4 came from.

⁷ Hendon report dated January 27, 2022, **OPP00001331**, pp. 4-5.

⁸ Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 6.

⁹ See Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰ Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 10.

¹¹ Hendon report dated January 28, 2022, **OPP00000815**, p. 7.



Other sources of intelligence

Acting Superintendent Bryden's notes from a January 26, 2022 JIG meeting mentions "storming Parliament info; not reliable/credible".¹² Acting Superintendent Bryden did not recall this information or of any concerns from Special Events regarding Parliament.

On January 26, 2022, Acting Superintendent Bryden also received an email from Isabelle Cyr-Pidcock, which notably stated that "OPP/PPS are expecting 10,000 ppl for the event Sat 29th at 12pm."¹³ When questioned in relation to this information, Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that the anticipated numbers for the Convoy were fluid and fluctuated between hundreds and thousands. He was anticipating a large number of people coming to Ottawa.

On that day, Acting Superintendent Bryden also received an email from Sergeant Catherine Brown sharing information provided by Steve Ball, President of the Ottawa Gatineau Hotel Association. Mr. Ball shared information that the protestors had the "intention of completely 'shutting [Ottawa] down'" and that "participants are concerned that they are losing their agenda to the issues of Freedoms and that the purpose is straying away from what it was intended to be."¹⁴ Acting Superintendent Bryden did not recall this email but found that it was consistent with the information provided in Hendon reports and calls regarding fringe elements.

On January 27, 2022, Acting Superintendent Bryden received an email from the OPS Command Centre concerning temporary parking lots for the Convoy.¹⁵ According to Acting Superintendent Bryden, individual residents were providing their properties for parking. He did not recall OPS clearing or designating any fields, nor did he recall OPS directing vehicles to these fields.

On that day, Acting Superintendent Bryden also received an email from Superintendent Patterson forwarding a briefing note concerning threats to Parliament Hill.¹⁶ During the

¹² Acting Superintendent Bryden's notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 3.

¹³ Email from Isabelle Cyr-Pidcock (OPS) to Acting Superintendent Bryden and Superintendent Patterson, January 26, 2022, **OPS00003089**.

¹⁴ Email exchange between Acting Superintendent Bryden and Superintendent Patterson, January 26, 2022, **OPS00003322**.

¹⁵ Email from Command Center to Acting Superintendent Bryden, Staff Sergeant Kevin Kennedy, Inspector Russel Lucas, and Constable George Bouris, January 27, 2022, **OPS00003320**.

¹⁶ Email from Superintendent Patterson to Acting Superintendent Bryden, January 27, 2022, **OPS00003333**.



interview, Acting Superintendent Bryden did not recall this document or whether it was considered a credible threat.

Sharing of Intelligence

As mentioned above, SIS prepared a risk/threat assessment, further discussed below, which was shared with Special Events and the OPS executive.

Sharing of Intelligence with OPS Executive

Acting Superintendent Bryden did not brief the OPS executive on intelligence; that was Superintendent Patterson's role. Acting Superintendent Bryden had no interaction with Chief Sloly between January 26, 2022 and January 28, 2022.

Acting Superintendent Bryden did not recall an email dated January 26, 2022, in which Superintendent Patterson forwards him an email from Chief Sloly expressing concerns on the OPS threat assessment.¹⁷ He was also not aware of the briefing note that Chief Sloly referred to in his email.

Sharing of Intelligence with planning team

Acting Superintendent Bryden did not recall ever sending Hendon reports to Inspector Lucas or any other planners on the Special Events team, although it was possible that other members of the SIS team shared those reports. Acting Superintendent Bryden could not confirm whether the threat assessment from January 28, 2022 was shared with Special Events.¹⁸

Acting Superintendent Bryden did not know if Inspector Lucas attended Hendon calls. He did not recall ever hearing him speak if he was present. He also did not recall sharing the intelligence from the January 26, 2022 Hendon call with Inspector Lucas. Acting Superintendent Bryden shared the reports with other people in the intelligence team, who may have briefed Inspector Lucas.

When questioned about his meeting notes from January 26, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.,¹⁹ Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that this was a daily internal meeting for people in the intelligence team. He did not recall Inspector Lucas being present at the meeting, although he acknowledged that he must have been present since his name is written in the margin of his notes. Acting Superintendent Bryden could not explain why his notes

¹⁷ Email from Superintendent Patterson to Acting Superintendent Bryden, January 26, 2022, **OPS00003073**.

¹⁸ Email thread from January 28, 2022, **OPS00003965**.

¹⁹ See Acting Superintendent Bryden's notes, **OPS00014555**, pp. 2-3.



from this meeting mentioned “11 convoys”. The OPS was expecting several convoys but he does not know where the number “11” came from.

A similar internal intelligence meeting took place on January 27, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.²⁰ Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that the note on the top of the page (“prolonged/protracted event”) referred to the fact that the convoy might stay in Ottawa longer than the weekend. He was not sure why this was mentioned on the top of the page.

Acting Superintendent Bryden expressed surprise at the presence of Inspector Lucas at this meeting, based on his name in the margin. He had no recollection of Inspector Lucas’ presence at a meeting for the intelligence team.

Acting Superintendent Bryden did not know why his notes from February 1, 2022, indicate “not pushing it to the right places” under the “Special Events – Info Officer” heading of an intelligence command meeting.²¹ He did not recall who the speaker was either.

Threat Assessment

The threat assessment was that the Convoy had low to no threat in terms of violence and other critical risk factors. Acting Superintendent Bryden remembered that Deputy Chief Bell had some concerns around the threat assessment and level of threat indicated at some point and confirmed that his notes from January 28, 2022 (“TA Issues (Bell)”) referred to these concerns.²²

Acting Superintendent Bryden recalled that Deputy Chief Bell expressed some concern about whether the threat assessment matched the level of threat. To the best of Acting Superintendent Bryden’s recollection, Deputy Chief Bell had expressed the view that the OPS lacked sufficient information or that information was missing concerning activists. The threat level had been deemed low earlier on but that with the number of vehicles, supplies, and number of people, it was a bigger movement than expected.²³ There was however no specific threat of violence or major risk at that point, or intelligence that a violent individual was coming to Ottawa.

Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes also mention that the “plan is to de-mobilize the convoy on Sunday, but current TA doesn’t support that operational move; current TA says

²⁰ See Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 7.

²¹ See Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 15.

²² Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 9.

²³ See Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 9:
“‘augmented/bolstered’ TA; threat level has changed”.



low/no threat”.²⁴ Acting Superintendent Bryden did not know what the plan was, although he was under the impression that it was to disrupt the protest and shut it down. He also did not know whether the view that there was low to no threat and that the current threat assessment did not support the demobilization plan was communicated to a member of the executive or to the planning team.

Regarding the January 28 Hendon report’s statement that “fringe elements amongst the convoy participants and supporters likely represent the greatest potential threat to public order and safety”²⁵, Acting Superintendent Bryden reiterated that fringe elements are always a possibility for any event. Similarly, the potential for confrontation between law enforcement and protestors that could result in violence is always a risk. There was no anticipated heightened risk of violence for the Convoy.

When asked whether an increased length of stay could increase the risk of violence or attract fringe elements, Acting Superintendent Bryden answered that it could, but that he does not recall ever discussing this point internally. He explained that the more entrenched a group gets, the more it can attract others.

Acting Superintendent Bryden could not confirm whether the OPS threat assessment was consistent with the OPP’s threat assessment. He did not remember OPP’s threat assessment but did not expect that it would be significantly different from OPS’ assessment.

Acting Superintendent Bryden acknowledged that the threat assessment should have said “low threat” rather than “low to no threat”.

Operational Plan

Acting Superintendent Bryden never received any operational plans from Special Events. He could not confirm whether the threat assessment in the “Freedom Convoy – Canada Unity plan” dated January 28, 2022²⁶ was the new threat assessment prepared by the Intelligence Directorate. He agreed that the plan’s threat assessment section was consistent with the intelligence received at the time with regard to the fact that “the most likely police matter ... [was] the vast number of vehicles on area roads” and that “the Convoy will be able to stop and effectively shut down movement if they desire”.²⁷ On the

²⁴ Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 9.

²⁵ Hendon report dated January 28, 2022, **OPP00000815**, pp. 7-8.

²⁶ Document titled “Freedom Convoy – Canada Unity”, January 28, 2022, **OPS00004221**.

²⁷ Document titled “Freedom Convoy – Canada Unity”, January 28, 2022, **OPS00004221**, p. 7.



latter point, he added that he was not aware that the Convoy wanted to shut down movement. When asked whether the plan should have mentioned that protests might continue after the weekend, Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that it should be stated if there was such intelligence at the time.

Acting Superintendent Bryden believes that the OPS was planning for a two-day event at the time, as mentioned in the plan.²⁸ He was however not involved in planning for the event, so did not know whether there was a plan to deal with the possibility of protestors staying longer. Acting Superintendent Bryden agreed that there should be a contingency plan in case protestors stayed longer.

Acting Superintendent Bryden was not aware of the OPS plan regarding vehicle parking.

RCMP's Role During the Protests

Acting Superintendent Bryden could not confirm why the RCMP took the lead of the JIG and of the National Capital Region Command Center (the “NCRCC”) on January 31, 2022.²⁹

On the next day, Acting Superintendent Bryden wrote that “OPS doesn’t have the skills/resources like the RCMP; thank god they lead”.³⁰ Acting Superintendent Bryden explained that this referred to the fact that the RCMP is the best at gathering open-source intelligence and social media intelligence.

²⁸ Document titled “Freedom Convoy – Canada Unity”, January 28, 2022, **OPS00004221**, p. 12.

²⁹ See Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 13.

³⁰ See Acting Superintendent Bryden’s notes, **OPS00014555**, p. 15.